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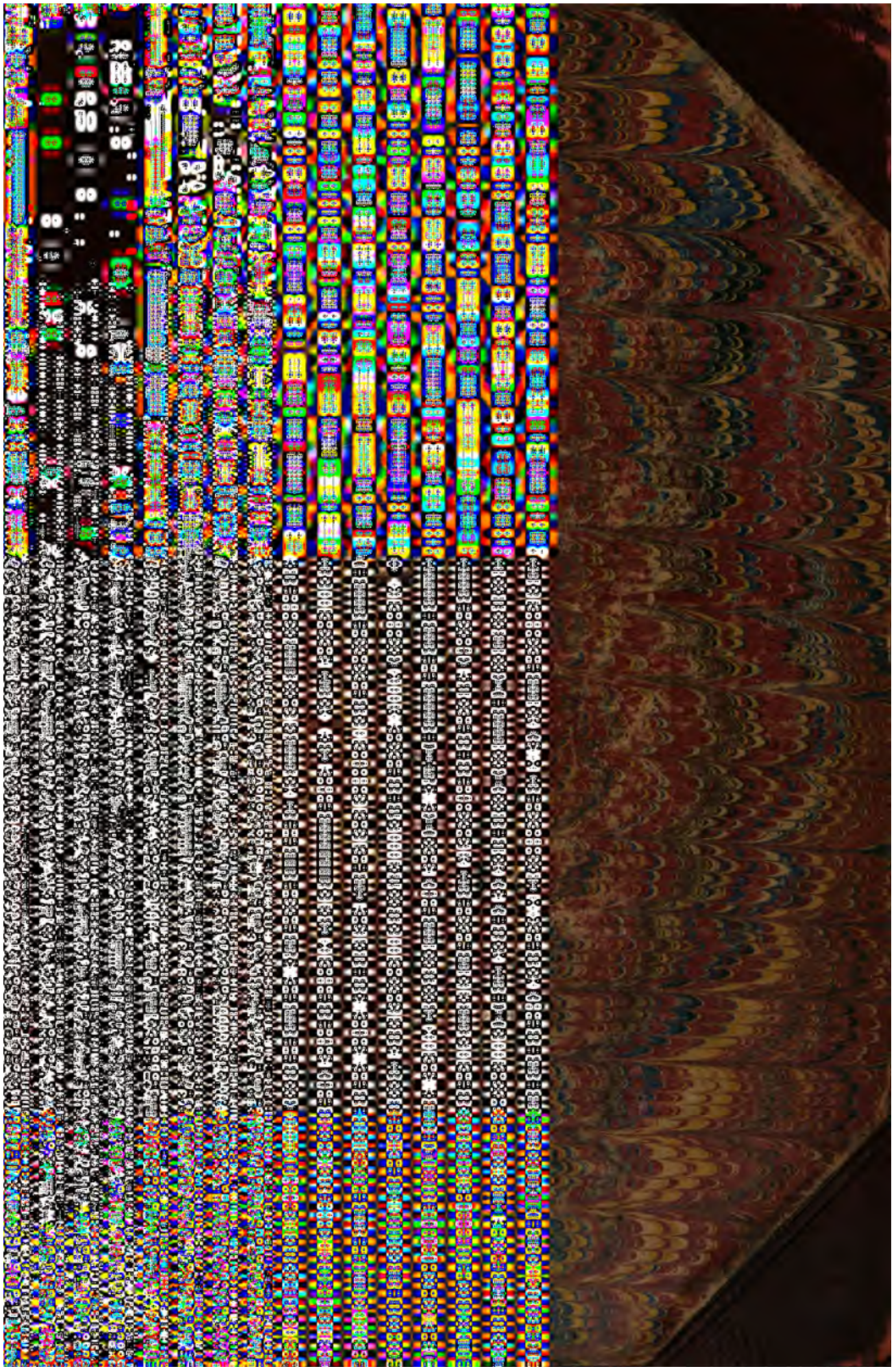
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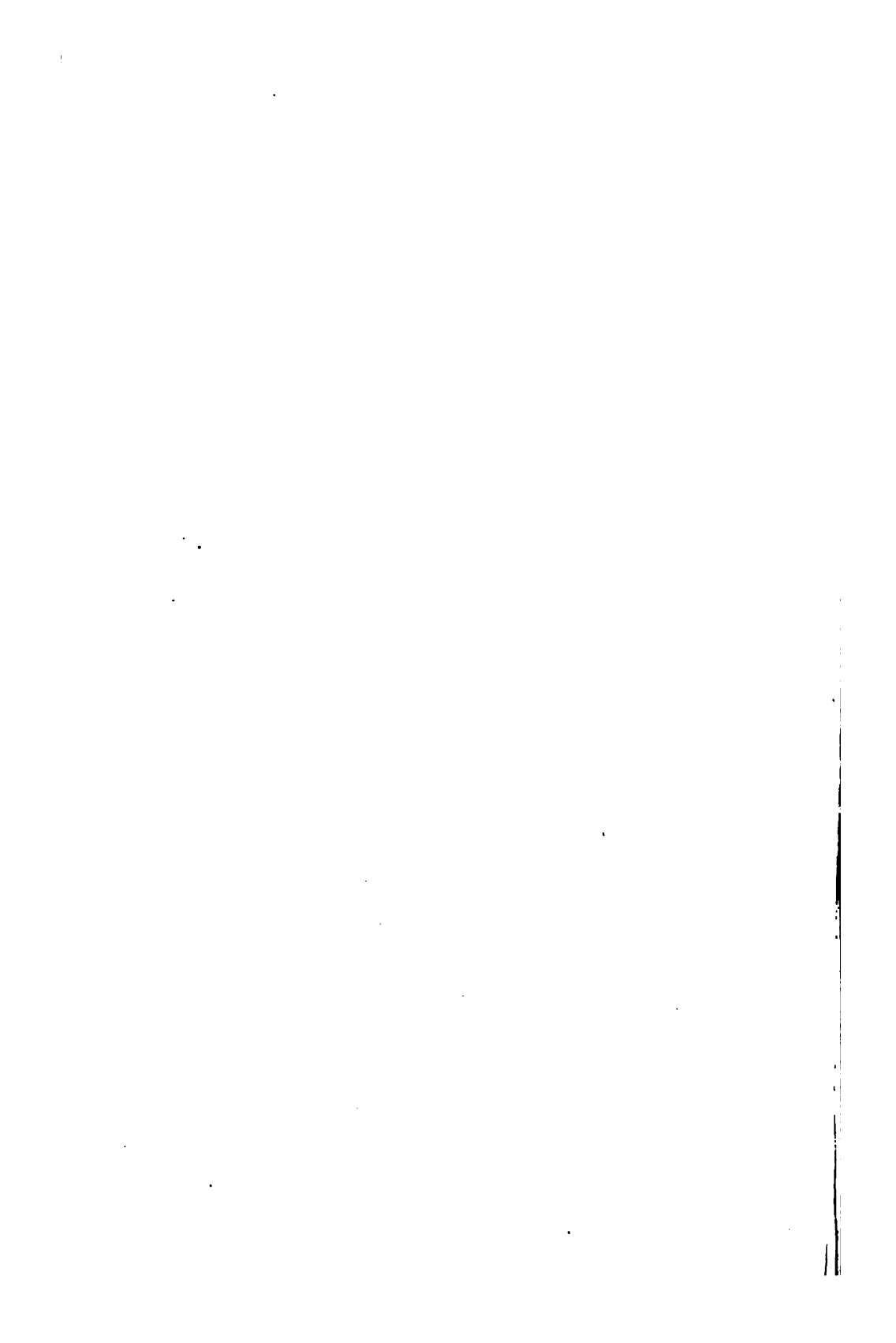


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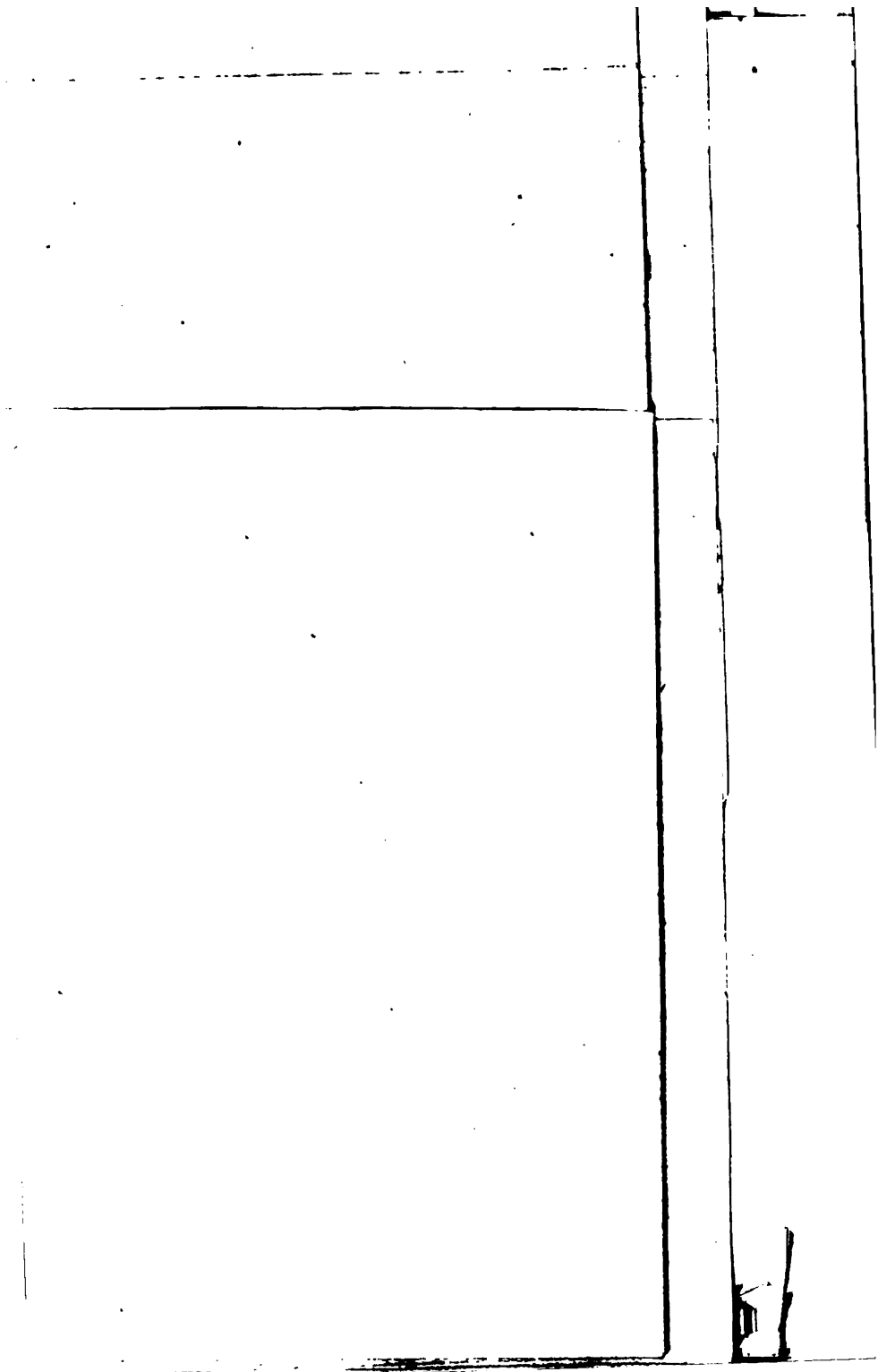
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GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES
OF
EXPEDITIONS IN CENTRAL AFRICA,
BY
THREE DUTCH LADIES.

BY
JOHN A. TINNE, ESQ., F.R.G.S.

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GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES OF EXPEDITIONS IN
CENTRAL AFRICA, BY THREE DUTCH LADIES.

By John A. Tinne, Esq., F.R.G.S.

IN the month of July, 1861, the three Dutch ladies, my relations, whose adventures I am about to relate, left their home at the Hague and arrived at Alexandria in August, to commence their third journey in Egypt—having previously visited it in 1856 and 1858—and to proceed through it to other countries adjacent to the Nile.

They wintered in the outskirts of Cairo, at a charming country seat, a pretty little palace of white marble, surrounded with gardens, full of roses, jessamine and other sweet-scented flowers in full bloom. Their time was fully occupied in making preparations and laying in stores for their expedition.*

Quitting their pretty villa with regret, they embarked on the 9th of January, 1862. They were obliged to hire three boats. No. 1 contained themselves, four European servants, a Syrian cook with two assistants, five dogs, the necessary articles of toilet for the ladies, canteens, guns, including an elephant-rifle and several fowling-pieces, ammunition, provisions for a year and, as it was impossible in those parts to procure change, £800 worth of small copper

* They made the acquaintance at Cairo of Dr. Krapf, a German Protestant Missionary, an agreeable old man, who had twice before travelled in Abyssinia, and for which he was again on the point of starting. At one time they felt inclined to accede to his proposition and spend the rainy season at Gondar, the capital of that country, but subsequent circumstances induced them to decide otherwise.

coin—a load of itself for ten camels. No. 2 carried camels, a horse and donkey, with their grooms, a janissary and a Nubian huntsman, four donkey-saddles, ropes and other harness, panniers, a palanquin, saddle bags, six tents, iron bedsteads and bedding and casks for carrying water across the desert. No. 8 contained thirty-two trunks and packages, with furniture, books, engravings &c. &c.

We will not refer to their travels over beaten ground, already often described, but, passing by Assouan, where the first Cataract occurs, and all the usual places of resort, we commence with their leaving Korosko, where they parted with their boats, or, to use their own words, “left the Nile, Tourists and Civilization,” and began their journey across the Nubian Desert. Between the last-named place and Abu-Hammed the river makes a considerable bend, and the navigation is difficult. The distance between these two places is about 300 geographical miles, but by water, following the sinuities of the river, it is more than double that distance. Since, however, every convenience for encampment and all provisions were to be conveyed overland, the retinue was rather formidable. It consisted, in addition to those before mentioned, of an Arab chief, six guides and twenty-five camel-drivers. There were camels for the baggage and provisions and dromedaries for people to ride, 102 in number, besides two milch camels to provide milk in the desert. The camels conveyed chickens in baskets and provisions of every sort—fruit, eggs, potatoes, tea, coffee, flour, wine, beer, brandy: there were also sheep.

They left Korosko on the 26th of February, and reached Abu-Hammed in fifteen days, during two of which they rested in very romantic valleys. They did not find it the horrible desert they expected, but interspersed with rocks and hills, valleys and plains, with many varieties of trees and plants. The camels &c. had herbs to eat every night;

they found water in the clefts of the rocks enough to replenish their barrels ; and the camels could often obtain drink. The usual time for crossing the desert is eight or nine days ; but the ladies did not feel inclined to travel more than seven or eight hours a-day, so that almost double the time was occupied in the journey.* Above Abu-Hammed they rejoined the river, which, however, is not easily navigable between that place and Berber—the stream being rapid ; and one of the Cataracts (the fifth) is situated about 80 or 40 miles below Berber.

One of the ladies was so fatigued with the land journey, that they procured a little boat of the country—which is described as being very much like an old-fashioned piano case—with six boatmen, having paddles like wooden spoons with very long handles ; but on the first day, when the rest of the party had travelled some hours by land and pitched their tents, no boat came. They lighted fires by the river side and sent men back by the banks, but no tidings were obtained till the next day, when it was ascertained that the men at sunset were so tired that they had stopped at a village on the river-bank for the night. They found the villagers very hospitable, and rejoined their party at nine o'clock the next morning. After this adventure the servants would not go in the boats again, and so proceeded by land towards Berber, following the course of the river. The ladies, however, were so pleased with the water excursion, that they reverted to it on the two following days ; and thus the journey of four days was prolonged to eight. At the end of that period

* They mention their paying a visit, at Gagee, near Abu-Hammed, to the tomb of Andrew Melly, a merchant of Liverpool, who, with his wife, their two sons and daughter, travelled as far as Khartûm, in the Soudan, in 1851. He was seized with fever on the return journey and, after five days' illness, died in his tent near this spot. The erection of the monument, of white marble (the inscription being in gold), was entrusted by his family to Mr. Consul Petherick, who was aided in the pious task by the Governor, Latif Pasha ; and it was gratifying to observe that it was in excellent preservation, and treated with great respect by the Arabs and other inhabitants of the country.

they approached Berber, where they were received by thirty chiefs, who came to meet them two hours' journey from the town. They were mounted on camels and accompanied them to the entrance of the town, where the Governor stood to welcome them and offered them his garden to encamp in, which they describe as a sort of African Paradise. The heat was, however, intense—the thermometer standing at 120. They there took leave of their camels and drivers. The Arabs who had accompanied them appeared very grateful for the presents given to them and for the kindness with which they had been treated during the journey; and the ladies describe them as a very nice people. They had not the least trouble with them. They were very handsome men — not black, but bronze coloured, and most graceful figures.

During the whole of this journey, whenever they passed through a village they received the greatest hospitality. The women came out to invite them to repose, and brought them milk and dates. There were some very graceful young women, who danced before them to amuse them. They all seemed pleased and happy to see them. After remaining a short time at Berber, they engaged three boats, in which they proceeded up the Nile to Khartüm, the capital of the Soudan. The Atbara, or Black River (the Astaboras of the ancients), falls into the Nile about twenty miles above Berber. It rises in Abyssinia and brings down the black mud which enriches the plains of lower Egypt. Passing the sixth Cataract, about eighty miles below Khartüm, they describe the river as being neither interesting nor pretty.

Khartüm is situated on marshy ground on the Blue Nile, near the junction of that river with the White Nile. The town itself is but a collection of ugly mud huts and houses. The population amounts, notwithstanding, to about 40,000. Khartüm is the residence of Consuls of several nations, including, till recently, one of Great Britain, namely, Mr. Petherick,

who was absent in search of Captain Speke during the visit of the ladies. The ladies considered the Blue Nile to be the reverse of a pretty river. They remained on its southern bank till May, encamped in a pleasant garden ; but, finding that when the rains set in this would be a very disagreeable residence, they engaged a steamer belonging to one of the Viceroy's relatives, Prince Halim, formerly governor of the Soudan, in which with their boats they proceeded up the White Nile in search of a more suitable residence during the wet season. Their party, thirty-eight in number, consisted of the three ladies, two male and two female European and other servants, a Syrian cook and two assistants, an interpreter, a Janissary, two hunters, a Turkish officer and ten soldiers well armed, a mason and carpenter, the crews, an engineer and stokers ;— a horse, donkeys, mules, &c. The interpreter, who acted as captain of the steamer, and the mason were Europeans. It is stated that the price paid for an ox was 8s. 4d., for a sheep 4s. 2d., chickens 6d. a-piece, and so on. The feeding of the party cost £16 a month only. That was moderate enough ; but the hire of the boats and camels and the cost of all stores procurable from Europe were dreadfully high.

They were delighted with this part of the White Nile : it was different from the Nile in Egypt. They compare it to a richly ornamented water, like Virginia*Water, near Windsor—the banks being finely wooded with the Soonud* or gum tree, as large as oaks, tamarind trees and various beautiful shrubs—full of the prettiest blue monkeys, playing in the branches—the air full of love-birds and the river abounding with hippopotami, crocodiles and water-flowers. Amongst the latter were some like the large Victoria lily ; and at night the river was sparkling with fire-flies covering the lilies.

But there are drawbacks. The shameful slave-trade, though forbidden by the Viceroy, is going on as actively as ever. The

* Pronounced " Soont."

ladies stopped one day at a place where several boatfuls of these unfortunate creatures were also disembarked. They looked so miserable that the youngest lady gave orders to have two oxen killed to give them a treat, and she went to see that each got a portion, when a woman, having a little baby, came to kiss her hand and told her that she and one child were owned by one master, and a little boy, five years of age, with her old mother, was in another troop. She entreated to be with them as long as they remained in that place. Of course the favour was asked and obtained; and the meeting touched the young lady so much, that she redeemed and set free the whole family. The slave merchant added to the lot two other old women, starving of hunger,—no doubt eager to be relieved of the incumbrance.

The slave trade makes travelling on the river dangerous. The Negroes call all white people Turks; but the steamer having never traded in slaves, they were not irritated against the party on board of her; and in two or three instances the poor people approached near and enquired if it were true that the young lady was a daughter of the Sultan, as she rode a horse, and if she had come to help and comfort them. Some ventured on board the steamer—saying, when they saw the interpreter, “he would do them no harm, if we “could do them no good;” and they enjoyed, without fear, a cup of coffee and sugar. Money does not pass among them. For taking a ride on a bull one day, the charge was a muslin turban. A hundred dates and nine onions were paid for a piece of cotton stuff, the manufacture of the country. If a boy went a message, he got a handful of maize. Beads were out of fashion: although the ladies had large boxfuls, very few were disposed of.

In passing up the White Nile they called at two or three villages, but none pleased them—there being no trees nor shade of any sort. At length they came to the Abbas or

Soonud Islands. With these they were better pleased, but they found that when the river rose, these islands would be under water, so they proceeded beyond them and came to the foot of a small chain of romantic hills on the East bank, too high to be reached by the inundations and covered with trees. The soil was sandy : in short, this locality presented all the qualifications which the ladies thought necessary in establishing themselves during the four wet months. But none of their people would stay there with them. They were in dread of lions, tigers and elephants, none of which visit this locality, because they are afraid of the hippopotami and crocodiles, which are numerous. The ladies state that they had seen twenty or thirty hippopotami about the river, but they are quite harmless ; and with regard to the crocodiles, the sailors and people of the country are not afraid of them : besides, they always keep in or very near the water. The name of this mountain is Djebel (or Mount) Hemaya ; when there are two mountains they are called Djebalein ; if more than two, Djebal. Thus the hills in this locality are called Djebalein Dinka, being situated in the country of the Dinka tribe.

It was thought desirable that one of the ladies should return to Khartüm in the steamer, to engage her for a longer period—the other two ladies, with the boats and the principal part of the retinue, remaining meanwhile at Djebel Hemaya. Although the voyage had occupied five days in going up against wind and stream to where the little camp was pitched, it required only thirty hours for returning. At Khartüm it was necessary to get the steamer repaired ; this occupied a month, owing to the dilatory and harassing way of working. The French Consul was most attentive and kind and gave the lady all the assistance in his power, for which she expresses her great obligation. There were three English people in Khartüm whilst she remained on this visit : one of these was Mr. Baker, who had just arrived from Abyss-

now Sir Samuel Baker

sinia, and who, proceeding up the White Nile in November, was the first European to fall in with Speke and Grant at Gondokoro in the February following. On the 17th of June, having completed all her arrangements, the lady left Khartüm, with forty additional soldiers, for Djebel Hemaya, where she arrived on the 21st and found the whole party assembled on the river side to welcome her with firing of guns and exclamations of joy. All the people, who had been ill, were quite well again, except the cook, who was sent back to Cairo. Another had been brought from Khartüm, as the first had already previously complained of illness.

Several little incidents had occurred during their residence at Djebel Hemaya. One morning the youngest lady was sitting reading on some rocks near her tent, when, finding herself thirsty, she went towards a stream for water. One of her dogs barked towards a rock close to where she had been sitting. She approached cautiously and found behind it a six-months-old panther. Without moving, she called to her assistance the soldiers and servants, and they succeeded in catching it alive. She put on him a collar of one of her large dogs and he was placed in a cage, where he appeared to do well. On the same day she nearly succeeded in securing a porcupine. They also killed and stuffed a large crocodile and trapped alive a beautiful little musk cat, but it afterwards made its escape. They caught also a very beautiful large monkey, with long black and white hair, but it died and they preserved its skin. The ladies resided partly in tents on shore and partly on board the steamer. The seriff, or four months storm and rain, was very slight that year ; sometimes for two or three days together it was quite fine ; sometimes a shower for an hour or two, with or without thunder, and then it was all over. There were times, however, when the thunder and lightning were most awful.

Soon after the arrival of the steamer the ladies broke up their

encampment at Mount Hemaya and, on the 7th of July, proceeded up the river. The steamer was heavily laden and had in tow two heavily laden boats; consequently their progress against the stream was slow. The river between Mount Hemaya and Bahr el Ghazal is not at all pretty. The banks are a dead flat, for the most part covered with high rushes, and, being at certain seasons inundated for two or three miles from the river, there is a morass on either side, where no beast can come.

Their first stoppage, except for wood for the steamer, was at Kaka, a village belonging to an Arab chief, called Mahomet Cher, who had contrived to conquer the most powerful of the neighbouring black tribes and thus make himself master of this part of the Soudan. When his money failed him, he destroyed the surrounding villages, killed the men, sold the women and children as slaves and stole their flocks. This man lived in great state and rode a horse with a silver-covered saddle, and always had a drum beaten when he either entered or left his house. When they stopped at his village he was a little afraid, seeing that they had Turkish soldiers on board the vessels. He received the ladies with royal honours; he sent them sheep, oxen, fruit, vegetables, dancing women, antiquities—in short, he offered them anything that he possessed. He believed that the youngest lady was the favourite daughter of the Sultan, and offered to proclaim her Queen of the Soudan! When they were about to proceed, he advised them not to go further up the Nile, stating that the Shillüks—a people he was at war with—were so angry with every body coming from Khartüm that they burnt all their boats. They remained about a week at Kaka and then proceeded up the river.

Notwithstanding the caution given them by their host at Kaka, they were obliged to stop at the village of the Shillüks for wood as fuel. The sailors, after what they had heard, were afraid to go on shore. The youngest lady, however, with the

interpreter landed, and the officer with ten soldiers, armed, went to take care of them. Here the news had already arrived that the Sultan's daughter was coming up the river and they were well received. The interpreter had been there several times and was known to them, and they became quite sociable. They were, however, disappointed at the refusal of the ladies to help them to conquer the Arab chief, Mahomet Cher. The Scheik of the village came on board with several of his men—and they also offered to make the young lady Queen, if she would assist them in their war. They brought with them sheep and oxen as presents. The ladies considered these people much to be pitied. They are alike ill-treated by Arabs and Europeans, both of whom entice them on board their boats, and then carry them off as slaves.

From this village they proceeded up the river to the confluence of the Sobat, a large river that runs into the Nile on its eastern bank. The ladies determined to steam up this river as far as it was navigable, which voyage, including their return, occupied a week or ten days. They found it to be more interesting than that part of the White Nile they had lately passed, but not equal to that river below Mount Hemaya. They saw ostriches and a great number of giraffes, but not near enough to shoot any of them. The giraffes are very good eating. They saw elephants at a distance and the marks of their feet on the banks; likewise buffaloes, which are here considered the most dangerous animals to meet with. There were also gazelles, but all at a great distance. They partook of part of an immense elephant, given them by the hunter who had killed it, and they considered it very nice. They had not the luck to kill any hippopotami, which are also considered to be very good eating. Most probably the steamer frightened these creatures away. The fish was delicious, but difficult to catch.

After this excursion on the Sobat, they continued up the

Nile and arrived at Bahr el Ghazal, which is a large and sluggish stream, flowing from the west and passing into the small lake No. The White Nile here takes a bend, nearly at right angles southward, and some distance higher up it again becomes beautiful and interesting. Every now and then the flora on the banks changes. There were forest trees of great beauty—the mimosa, differing in flower but not in leaf, the tamarind tree, covered with most beautiful creeping plants, the papyrus, and a bush-like tree, with large yellow flowers, called Ambadsh (*Anemone mirabilis*), also the poison tree (*Euphorbia antiquorum*) which is almost leafless, except at the tip of the branches, and with small scarlet flowers growing round the branches, like those of the cactus. The natives break off a branch, when a milky juice oozes forth into which they dip their arrows, and the wounds inflicted by these are said to be mortal. The Arabs call the tree M'toopa. The flowers on the banks were so rich in colour and variety as to make the eyes ache to see them.

The windings of the White Nile are very circuitous above Lake No and the currents very strong, rendering the navigation dangerous. A sad accident happened at one of the rapids. The steamer failed to pull up the two heavily laden boats, so they were towed up by the sailors along the banks. They were all in the water, when the tow rope broke and the boats were floating down the stream. The janissary, Osman Aga, a strong Turk, jumped into the river, to swim with a rope to the bank, when in an instant he sank as if dead. It is supposed he had been seized with apoplexy. His body was recovered and every possible means were tried to restore animation, but in vain; and he was buried with all the Moslem honours and ceremony they could manage. He was wrapped in nineteen yards of calico, washed with a new piece of soap, and perfumes were burnt beneath his body. All the clothes he had died in were thrown into the water; and the

crews followed the corpse, laid in a new mat, to the grave, which had been dug under a large sycamore tree, on which an inscription was cut, marking the spot.

On the 4th of September they arrived at another halting place, St. Croix, a station of Austrian Roman Catholic missionaries—a very interesting establishment. They occupied thirteen huts, of similar form to those of the people of the country. One was used as a chapel, another as a messroom, others as dormitories, stores, a stable &c. The missionaries had been mostly Tyrolese. The ladies attended mass, which was quite respectably performed. The missionaries had fine voices and chanted the mass. They spoke Italian and Arabic.*

From this place the young lady went for a few days to explore the interior, and was delighted with her trip. She had with her her waiting maid, the interpreter, one of the missionaries, fourteen porters to carry them, and nine boys and girls to carry the luggage. They passed through some fine forests and very clean and pretty villages—the houses having flourishing gardens attached to them. The inhabitants were very hospitable; but she was obliged to sleep in the open air, on account of the cottages being full of smoke. This excursion occupied eight days.

They stayed at St. Croix till the 15th of September. The appearance of the river still improved as they advanced towards Gondokoro—there being fine forests on the banks and at one point the remains of what had been establishments and gardens. One had belonged to a Mr. Warnier. He was a great hunter, but was killed by a buffalo. They also stopped

* The establishment has since been abandoned, on account of the unhealthiness of the site and the sickness and mortality which had prevailed among the missionaries, who, out of a number of thirty persons originally forming the mission, were reduced to a residue of three. One was a strong fellow, who had stood his ground for seven years; but they were at last dismayed and left in the steamer with the ladies, on their return from Gondokoro to Khartūm, so far on their way homewards.

at a village belonging to a tribe called Chers—a most interesting people. Here all traffic was purely barter. The nearest approach to money is large blue beads;—spades, thread, salt, soap and waistcoats are also used as articles of barter. There is an establishment here belonging to a Circassian merchant. This place the ladies considered the most beautiful they had yet visited. The forests were lovely; and they had some idea, if they did not like Gondokoro, of returning there and building a residence, while the steamer was going down to Khartüm for supplies.

On the 30th of September they arrived at Gondokoro. As sailing boats do not usually make their appearance there till January, it caused a great sensation amongst the inhabitants to be visited by ladies from Khartüm, and, at that period, by three boatfuls of people. The ladies made several excursions: one was to the mountain Belenia, about twenty miles south-east of Gondokoro and four hours' ride. The road to it was through a rich plain, covered with large trees like an English park, and with thousands of herds of cattle and flocks of sheep and goats, browsing and pasturing over its surface, belonging to the villagers of the Bari tribe, a fine sturdy race of blacks, warlike and easily offended. So long as their maize and durra* last, they sing and dance night and day. Each village in turn has a feast. The population is estimated at 40,000 in number; and as they were friendly with the establishment at Gondokoro, the ladies went and returned in safety. These people speak Arabic and are very intelligent.

The ladies had been informed that the river was not navigable above Gondokoro, but they were not satisfied without seeing for themselves. They accordingly succeeded in steaming upwards for five hours, where they saw at a distance another mountainous range—probably the Kuku

* *Sorghum Vulgare*, or the great millet; or by the Arabs, M'tama. The inhabitants of this part of Africa depend upon it both for their beer and their stirabout, and also use it in aiding the fermentation of their plantain wine.

range of hills, on the west bank of the river. They seemed to rise abruptly from a sandy or watery plain, and did not appear in the distance to be either lofty or striking—nothing like a European chain of mountains. Beyond this they were unable to proceed, on account of the number of stones that impeded the navigation.* They heard that one of these mountains was remarkable for having an earthquake yearly. They did not land anywhere, but returned to Gondokoro. The reports they received of the disturbed state of the Negroes, arising from the lawless marauding and cruel atrocities perpetrated by a Maltese, named De Bono or Latif, and his nephew, precluded their farther advance by land,—otherwise we might have heard of these ladies having been the guests (not, most probably, of their own free will), along with Captains Speke and Grant, of King Mtesa or of King Kamrasi, in whose territories those travellers sojourned from January to November, 1862.†

Severe sickness, however, obliged them to return to Khar-tüm—two of the three ladies and nearly all the men of the three boats having been attacked by fever and ague, brought on by the unhealthy climate of Gondokoro. The young lady suffered also from exposure to the sun and was more seriously affected than the others. Quinine is the only remedy; but in her case it did not prevent returns of fever at intervals of two or three hours, and it then again lasted with great force, attended with delirium, for twelve or fourteen hours. After a week's duration she partially recovered; and the whole party re-embarked on the 22nd of October and arrived

* The people of the country ridicule the idea of one source of the Nile. At Gondokoro there is rain every day for six or eight months, not constant, but heavy showers; so that there is not, they say, "any one source of this river;—" "a hundred tributaries flow into the Nile above the Sobat." I am informed by a gentleman long resident in Egypt that it is observed that the water changes colour at various periods of the rise of the Nile. This appears to indicate that several branches, flowing through soils varying in colour and proceeding from different quarters, supply the main stream in succession.

† See Speke's Journal, pp. 266 to 558.

at Khartüm on the 20th of November, 1862, determined to make a fresh start as soon as the invalids were recovered.

It may here be stated that steaming up the Nile to Gondokoro (exclusive of stoppages and detours) occupied 360 hours, but returning to Khartüm, 170 hours.

Except for the illness that had prevailed, they liked Gondokoro very much. There was a beautiful terrace, belonging to the house the missionaries had built and deserted on account of its unhealthy site, planted with citron and tamarind trees, which were loaded at this time with fine and ripe fruit.

During a stay at Khartüm of two months and a half (from November, 1862, to February, 1863) preparations for another expedition of a far more formidable and important character made slow and tedious progress. They never saw such apathetic people. They were employed repairing and refitting the boats with sails and tackle, obtaining new tents, stores and supplies of all sorts. Nothing could be found further on, and everything had to be paid for beforehand; but the worst is that there is a scarcity of small metallic currency. Merchants bring wine, beer, brandy, groceries, cotton and silk manufactures, and are paid in ivory, gum and senna. The ladies, who had nothing of this sort to give in exchange for what they wanted, were obliged to pay for their cash 5 per cent. per month. They engaged fifty additional soldiers, bought guns and ammunition for them, and every day there seemed something new to order or to ask for.

However, the health of the party that had been at Gondokoro was entirely restored during their prolonged stay, and all were now in excellent spirits. They had found the weather too cool sometimes, even rather stormy at intervals, but agreeable and bracing—the wind blowing from the north and the sky bright and blue.

One of the three ladies determined on remaining at Khar-tüm. The Baron d'Ablaing (a Dutch gentleman) and Baron Theodore von Heuglin and Dr. Steudner (Germans) requested permission to join the expedition, which was gladly acceded to. Von Heuglin and Steudner are well known African travellers and naturalists : the former an ornithologist, the latter a botanist and also a medical man. Both drew beautifully and were able to take astronomical and geodesical observations. So that, as remarked by one of my fair correspondents, " we hope to make a more scientific, if not a more " agreeable, journey than the last ;" and thus in many respects they afforded each other mutual advantage and assistance.

This expedition had for its object to ascend the western tributary of the Nile, the Bahr el Ghazal, explore the several streams flowing into that river, and so onwards by land to the south-westward, towards the highlands of central Africa and the country of the Nyam-Nams, from which direction it is asserted by many geographers, that, at some seasons of the year, the largest supply of water is poured into the basin of the Nile.

It is generally supposed that Speke and Grant have solved the great geographical problem which has occupied the attention of the scientific world for so many centuries, the discovery of the sources of the Nile ; but to many who have investigated the matter more closely, this appears by no means certain, and, as the *Westminster Review* remarks, the words of the poet,

" Arcanum natura caput non prodidit ulli,
" Nec licuit populis parvum te, Nile, videre,"

have not yet lost their force.

Nearly a century ago it was believed that Bruce had solved the same problem, when he ascended to the source of the Bahr el Azrek, or Blue Nile. This, however, has for years been proved to be a mistake. The Blue Nile is but one of

the tributary branches that flow into the Nile on its right or eastern bank. For about 1800 geographical miles from the Mediterranean, the Nile has not a single tributary; then the Atbara, or Black River, flows into it on its right bank; next the Azrek, or Blue River, the Sobat and the Giraffe on the same bank; and it is fully 2,000 miles from its outlet before any stream enters it by the left bank, where we meet with the El Nil and Adda or Keilak; next with the Bahr el Ghazal,* which brings its sluggish length along from the westward, augmented by the Djür and other rivers, whose supply to the main stream is, according to Von Heuglin, very much underrated by geographers, so much so indeed, that it is believed by some to be the continuation of the White Nile. At the meeting of the Royal Geographical Society, on the 23rd Nov. last, at which I was present, the Earl of Donoughmore observed, "We now know where the White Nile comes from, but we do not know the extent of the country whose waters are drained into the Bahr el Ghazal. It might turn out that a considerable, possibly the larger proportion of the waters, which form the inundation of the Nile, comes from this quarter and not from the White Nile; and he hoped that the attention of Baron Von Heuglin would be directed to this point."

The President, Sir Roderick Murchison, added, "I might observe that the ladies were really on the right road to obtain this knowledge; for, their great object was to reach the mountainous region whence the Bahr el Ghazal flowed."

I have myself since mentioned the subject of this discussion to the ladies in my letters to them; but Baron Von Heuglin is already fully aware of its importance, as may be seen from his communications to Captain Speke and Dr. A. Petermann, which have been published many months ago, in the *Mittheilungen* of Justus Perthes, edited by Dr. Augustus Petermann,

* That is if we allow that the Bahr el Ghazal is a tributary and not the principal river.

and published at Gotha, which I recommend to your notice, as it contains original communications from and references to travellers in various parts of the world, of great interest and utility, particularly of those countries in Africa which were visited by Von Heuglin and others.

Being about to penetrate into an almost unknown country, it was arranged that Baron Von Heuglin and Dr. Steudner, acting as pioneers in fact, should precede the ladies and Baron D'Ablaing. They sailed in the first boat on the 25th January, 1863, which carried them and twenty-five other persons, their boatmen and servants, as well as a horse, two mules, eight donkeys, the scientific instruments and a large quantity of luggage, provisions and ammunition.

The ladies and Baron D'Ablaing followed on the 2nd of February with the remainder of the flotilla, consisting of the steamer, two Dahabiehs, or passenger boats, and two other sailing boats, carrying the bulk of the people, the live stock and stores. In these boats and in the steamer were about two hundred persons in all, including sixty-five soldiers, who were armed with muskets, also four camels, thirty donkeys and mules, a horse, and the stores, consisting of ammunition, articles of barter and provisions for ten months' supply.*

Von Heuglin and his party having set sail on the 25th January, a very favourable north wind brought them on the third day to El Eis Island, the most beautiful part of the White Nile. On the 31st of January, they passed Djebel Tefafan, 800 feet high, and three miles from the river; this hill is not, as hitherto supposed, of volcanic origin. On the 1st of February they reached a wretched nest of huts, Hellet† Kaka, the residence of the Viceroy's deputy; and on the 4th passed the mouth of the Sobat; on the 5th they reached

* Amongst other things may be mentioned a ton and a half of beads, eight bars of copper, 12,000 cowrie shells, pepper, salt, onions, dates &c.

† Hellet means village.

Lake No, from which point for more than 200 miles the boat had to thread its way through the Bahr el Ghazal. The river at this season of the year is very narrow in some places, almost like a canal, and is surrounded in every direction by a swampy plain, extending as far as the eye can reach. These marshes abound with gigantic reeds, and are interspersed with numerous lakes, or rather large ponds, abounding in fish. When they become connected in the rainy season they form one large lake, which the natives traverse in numerous canoes, formed of hollowed trees or bundles of reeds lashed together, on which the native sits astride, his legs dangling in the water and his hands being used as paddles. The Nuars, one of the tribes who inhabit these marshes, seem particularly qualified for dwelling in such a locality. They are from six to seven feet high. They were seen for hours at a time standing on some ant hill amongst the reeds, leaning on their lances and watching the passing boats. They cover their bodies with ashes to alleviate the smart caused by the sting of the mosquitoes, which are very numerous.

Von Heuglin and his party entered Lake Rek or the Mishra* of Rek, as it is called, on the 25th of February.

The other vessels with the ladies and their party did not arrive till the 10th of March. After embarking at Khartüm, on the 2nd of February, and at the last moment, the dahabieh appropriated to the young lady was found to be rapidly filling with water; the attention of the crew being drawn to it, they discovered that a large hole had been bored in her side, through which as she deepened with her cargo the water poured in. In a couple of hours more she would have sunk. As may be supposed this caused great dismay, and her cargo was quickly discharged. The hole having been stopped, they proceeded on their voyage; but the Governor, who had come to their assistance with a gang of workmen, as the boat

* Mishra signifies port.

belonged to the government, gave instructions to go no further than to a certain tree, called "Maka Beg," about three hours sail from Khartüm, round the point of junction of the Blue and White rivers, and to anchor there, to see if all remained safe. The leak continued as bad as before; and then, on closer enquiry, the captain was obliged to confess that he and the pilot had bored the hole to avoid going on the voyage, which they did not like. The rest of the crew were also disaffected. The damage being at last repaired, and a new captain, pilot and crew engaged, they continued their voyage again on the 5th February, but it was the 10th of March before they arrived at the Mishra of Rek.

Their progress through the Bahr el Ghazal was exceedingly slow on account of the obstacles they had to overcome, the river being full of curves and windings and covered with forests of rushes and ambadsh—the latter fringing the banks and growing into deep water, in some places completely blocking up the channel. These forests of ambadsh Von Heuglin compares to rows of well used brooms, very fragile, and constantly shooting up from the roots stems which grow to thirty feet high. The leaf is of the same shape as that of the ever recurring mimosa, with a large fragrant yellow flower. The boatmen beat it down with sticks or cut it with hatchets, and so opened a channel for the boats; but it became necessary to take off the steamer's paddles and proceed in small boats, one of which towed the steamer.

This part abounds with herds of elephants. Hundreds of them were seen strolling through the bog into which their feet sank two or three feet; and, every now and then, a hippopotamus rose suddenly from amidst the rushes to enjoy a bath in the river. A lion was shot at by Baron D'Ablaing, but was missed. Buffalo herds were seen grazing in bushy places, especially near the ant hills; but, in spite of the almost countless quantity of game of all kinds, hunting is next to

impossible, owing to the nature of the soil and the rustling of the hunters' steps amidst the reeds and rushes, which frightens the animals away, and they are soon beyond the reach of the gun. They saw several of those large and rare wading birds, *Balœniceps rex*; indeed the variety of birds, aquatic and terrestrial, astonished them. Von Heuglin states that he has collected many new species, which I understand he has sent to the Natural History Museum of Leyden in Holland. I may mention also that Mr. Petherick, till lately our consul in the Soudan, has greatly enriched the British Museum with many rare specimens of birds, as well as of quadrupeds, fish and shells.

In such bad hunting ground, where they were unable to kill any of the elephants, one of the vessels fell in with a dead one floating in the stream. This was regarded by the boatmen as a prize of the highest order, the tusks of a fine elephant being sometimes worth about £25, and in that country the most current article of barter. The sight of such a prize was therefore hailed with joyful shouts. The difficulty, however, was to extract its tusks, as there was no spot of dry land to drag it upon. They managed, however, to sever the head from its huge carcase and then to haul the former on board the steamer. It took twenty-four men a whole day and night to effect this operation, knives, swords and axes being employed for the purpose. The tusks were made a present of to the men for their exertions.

Having reached Lake Rek, the travellers had attained the extreme navigable point in this direction. On coming up to the station they found in it twenty-five trading vessels, crowded together in the utmost confusion, some waiting for cargoes of ivory to arrive from the interior, others as store ships for durra, wherewith to supply the people in the service of the traders. It took hours to thrust the newly arrived steamer and boats towards the shore, where they were tightly locked

together. They were received with all honours, being saluted from about 300 muskets, the compliment being duly answered by the expedition, the Dutch national flag floating gloriously at the mast heads of six vessels.

The so named Lake or Mishra of Rek consists of the bending of the River Ghazal so as to separate a portion of the land into the form of an island, which is about a thousand paces long and fifty broad, the surrounding stream being about thirty or forty paces wide. The island is called "Kyt" by Petherick; but on this the ladies remark, "We do not know why he has so named it, as the natives call it the "Mishra of Rek." It is probably situated at about $8^{\circ} 27'$ north latitude, and $29^{\circ} 48'$ longitude east of Greenwich, but the longitude must only be regarded as having been approximately determined from the observations of Von Heuglin and Petherick.

The entire flotilla being at length re-assembled, it was intended to have started immediately on their land journey, but it was found impossible to procure porters to carry their baggage. It was accordingly arranged that Baron Von Heuglin and Dr. Steudner with the soldiers belonging to the ladies, and all the donkeys laden with as much baggage as they could carry, should go forward in search of a suitable site for an encampment during the four or five months of the rainy season, between the mountains Kosanga or Casinka and the Lake Rek, deposit the baggage there, engage more porters, and then return with them to headquarters. They started on the 23rd of March; but soon, besides other difficulties, the evil influences of the climate began to tell on their health, and they were both seized with severe fever; most of their people also fell sick. They crossed the river Djür on the 2nd April. It is about 300 yards wide. They arrived the same evening at the village of Wau, where they stopped, as there were favourable

prospects of obtaining the desired number of porters there, of whom they wanted about 150. Here Dr. Steudner became rapidly worse. On the 9th he fell into a sound sleep or stupor from which he never rallied, and he died quietly at noon on the 10th April. Baron Von Heuglin speaks most touchingly of the tender care with which he deposited his remains, shrouded in an Abyssinian wrapper and strewn over with leaves, in a deep grave, dug under a group of trees far enough off from the bank of the river to escape its inundations. Not until the 17th of April could Von Heuglin leave the mournful Wau and the country of the Djür to go to Bongo, in the country of the Dor. Here he succeeded in obtaining more porters, so that by the 24th of April he was able to return to the Lake Rek. As also on their first arrival at Lake Rek they ascertained that a quantity of additional stores and soldiers would be required, Baron d'Ablaing returned to Khartüm in the steamer to procure them, and he rejoined the party at the Mishra on the 11th of May. He had engaged forty soldiers, and brought more provisions and medicines. This raised the number of soldiers in the service of the ladies to upwards of a hundred; and, with the twenty-five in the service of Baron d'Ablaing, and the male servants, it made their total force amount to 150 men, capable of defending the party in case of need.

It may here be stated that at Lake Rek the ladies with their friends had attained the extreme westerly point in this direction that is yet known to geographers. Brun Rollet took the same track in 1856; Petherick, in 1858; Antonori, in 1860; and Lejean, in 1861. But none of the astronomical observations we have appear to be sufficiently exact. Although the persons before-named have penetrated in this direction, the country has been principally traversed by ivory merchants, more or less unacquainted with science. Petherick has made several journeys through the Dinka, Djür and Dor territories as far

as Mundo, a large village in the country of the Nyam-Nams, to about $3^{\circ} 30'$ north latitude and 28° longitude east of Greenwich, where he has established hunting stations as well as at other places. We may, therefore, conclude that every step westward or southward will be a new conquest for geography.

During the absence of Baron d'Ablaing and Baron Von Heuglin, the ladies state that they were visited by Mr. and Mrs. Petherick who, hearing they were at the Mishra, came to see them and to offer to be of use to them, which they were in many respects. From them they heard of Captains Speke and Grant having arrived at Gondokoro. The ladies say they "never saw a more disappointed and dejected man than Mr. Petherick. He and his wife have had dreadful ill luck. He had made the best arrangements to meet Captain Speke, and his boats were loaded and despatched with all sorts of good things for his use. They set off too late from Khartūm in March, 1862, and the wind being then adverse caused much delay and damage to their boats, and they were consequently obliged to abandon them and proceed by land from Abu-Kaka. This was the end of August, 1862; and it being then the rainy season, that plan proved equally impracticable. They were delayed from August to February by rain, by deep morasses, by affrays with inhospitable natives and by illness, and only arrived at Gondokoro in February, 1863, five days after Captain Speke, who had previously accepted Mr. Baker's provisions and boat, and refused further aid from Mr. Petherick, so that he had to retain all he had sent forward for Captain Speke's requirements, which was fortunate for us, for we were thus provided with wine, pale ale, tea, soap, pearl barley, Lemann's biscuits, a gutta-percha boat, nay, we cannot say what. It is strange to find these luxuries here, and we enjoy them greatly.

"We hope Mrs. Petherick will publish her journal; it will make people at home stare to see what they have suffered, and there can be no doubt of its accuracy.

"Captain Speke fell in with Mohammed, a rascally agent of De Bono, at Faloro, and also with Kurchid Agha, at Gondokoro. From these he appears to have imbibed certain prejudices against Mr. Petherick. It was quite natural that De Bono should speak ill of Mr. Petherick, as his nephew had been arrested by him, as a British subject, for slave trading and had been sent by him as a prisoner down to Cairo." It was this De Bono to whom the ladies referred in an earlier part of this narrative, who had committed the atrocities among the negroes, and he is, they say, Mr. Petherick's worst enemy. Previously to Petherick having fallen in with Captain Speke, De Bono or his agents had so managed to prejudice his mind against Petherick that the latter has since become the object of persecution by the very man whom he and his excellent wife had made every sacrifice to serve. The ladies write to me that if there is any opportunity of saying a word of kindness for Mr. Petherick, they would feel really obliged to me for so doing. Khartüm, they say, "is so far off that few are near enough to say a kind word for him at home."

Owing to the illness of some of the party, and having to wait for the return of M. von Heuglin and M. D'Ablaing, they were detained at the Mishra till the 17th May, when they finally disembarked from their boats with all their baggage, and made a start inland, but only for a short distance, in order that the porters might see what they had to carry. It was in Mr. Petherick's power to render the ladies further assistance, and to leave for them, in addition to their own large guard, his vakeel, or agent, and 130 porters, who had just brought down ivory from one of his stations.

Writing on the 1st June from the village of Abu Senoon, which they reached on the 20th May, one of the ladies says, "We did not go with a light heart, as Baron von Heuglin had announced that he was too ill to move. Baron d'Ablaing was obliged to stay with him, and Mr. Petherick also attended him and gave him his medicines twice daily."

The first night after landing they had an awful storm—the first to which they had been exposed; for hitherto they had been able to sleep on the decks of their vessels, and the nights were cool and pleasant. But this storm was dreadful: everything was wet. They sat up all night, expecting to be blown away.*

The next day, the 18th, was very fine and the sun soon dried everything again; only instead of setting off at six in the morning, it was twelve at noon before they started, so that they did not go far that day—only about two hours' march. They came to a village with empty tookuls or huts; and as there was another storm brewing, they got all under shelter.

Petherick's The 19th was another short day. Their own vakeel was a stupid fellow; Mr. Petherick's a plausible cheat; and the *Petherick's* soldiers lazy rascals and thieves. Petherick's porters having *Petherick's* no durra and nothing to eat, they had to give them two bullocks a day. This did not satisfy them: they wanted durra. The vakeel's offer, to go to his zeriba to fetch it, was agreed to. His negroes refused to go by the direct road the ladies wanted to go, and insisted on taking them a long detour by their own place.

They halted at Abu Senoon at three in the afternoon, to allow time for 100 of their porters to overtake them with a portion of the baggage. They had just settled in a large tookul when another violent storm broke over their heads, with wind, rain, hail, thunder and lightning. The tents, half put up, were blown down; and the young lady was nearly smothered in the folds of her's. The severe cold and wetting she then experienced brought on fever and ague. The soldiers also mutinied: they complained they had nothing to eat, although

* Describing the same storm in a letter I have seen, Mrs. Petherick writes—"We are in the heart of the rainy season, and it comes down with a vengeance. The roof of our cabin is not water-tight, and we were drenched below, in bed or out of bed—no spot exempt. We tried the shelter of umbrellas, but they took up too great a space; and the best protection afforded we derived from a panther skin placed over head."

they had five bullocks a day; then they said they had not enough durra. The young lady, notwithstanding her illness, had them all brought to her presence and, severely rebuking them, made them all lay down their guns: they then came, one by one, to beg her pardon. So they arranged that as many as they could spare should go on to Ali au Mori's zeriba* and wait there; and the negroes were sent back with fifteen donkeys to get more durra and provisions from the boats.

On the 21st, 22nd and 23rd May the young lady continued the same—even worse; on the 24th, when the negroes returned with the donkeys, they were accompanied by Baron d'Ablaing, frightened at the accounts he received; on the 25th it was thought she was dying; but, by giving her wine and bark, on the morning of the 26th she was a little better—the crisis was past; on the 27th much better and improving; on the 28th the anxiety of her friends was allayed; and by the 31st May all cause of alarm was removed. It is impossible to describe the feelings of her friends during that disastrous week. The illness here alluded to and also that of Baron von Heuglin, as well as the death of poor Dr. Steudner, threw a damp on their journey which it was difficult to shake off.

Resuming the narrative—the ladies say further:—"Once more *en route*, we shall, we trust, arrive safe and sound at the mountain Casinka, where we shall sow our seeds and remain till the weather is again fine and the earth dry. It must be a beautiful country, full of game and the people very good. . . . We know the masters of nearly all the zeribas on our route; and they have promised to supply us with wine and all we want. We have already sent off three companies of porters, amounting to about 400 men, with our baggage. They carry but little, say 40lbs. each, and all on their heads."

On the 7th of June, they write:—"We are expecting

* "Zeriba," an establishment or enclosure.

“ Von Heuglin to join us to-day ; we hope he may be able
 “ to go with us ; it is so great an advantage to have a
 “ scientific man in one's company. Although Captain Speke
 “ has informed us that this part of Africa presents no interest,
 “ yet a new country always has some, and it is so great a
 “ pleasure to have a really good map.

“ Afok, through which we passed, was a very pretty village,
 “ with richly cultivated patches of durra, ground-nuts and
 “ pumpkins, around it. We were, however, anxious to get
 “ on and reach our final halting place, as on any day we
 “ may expect a storm, accompanied with more or less of rain,
 “ so that what is now solid ground becomes like the roads at
 “ the Hague after a heavy shower, first mud and then per-
 “ fectly impassable. We have several rivers to pass before we
 “ come to where we hope to stay, near the Mountain Casinka.
 “ With the assistance of the traders, we hope to get well
 “ through the intervening part of the country. We are now
 “ proceeding towards Ali au Mori's zeriba, where we have
 “ sent on provisions. From there, we hope to cross to
 “ Casinka, and from thence we are only two days' journey
 “ from the Nyam Nams' country, our intended goal.”

Accompanied by Baron von Heuglin, who was better and
 had been brought up from the Mishra of Rek by Baron
 D'Ablaing, the whole party left Abu Senoon on the 18th June.

Though still weak and subject to returns of fever, the
 invalids stood the journey very well. Baron D'Ablaing and
 Baron von Heuglin rode on mules. One of the ladies was
 carried in a chair, the other had an* ngerib, a sort of palan-
 quin with an awning over it, to keep off the sun, and her
 mattress on it, so that she reposed very agreeably. Each lady
 was carried by four negroes, of whom there were eight relays.
 The three maid-servants rode on donkeys. The horse was
 disabled by an accident. The heat and damp were fatal to the

* Pronounced angerib.

poor camels ; they lost the four they had and six donkeys, besides a mule. They had thirty-eight donkeys left, but these had suffered so much from climate and neglect, and had been so cruelly overburdened when allowed to be loaded at all, that they were kept for the sick or tired human beings. A hundred and ninety-two negroes were employed to carry their immediate luggage ; of these people there was no reason to complain. They had already employed five hundred ; not one had run away ; not one had put down his burden, nor been in any way troublesome. As much could not be said for the *soldiers*, who were hired to carry guns and watch the porters. A bag of flour was stolen and five or six cut open and sewn up again : no negroes here can sew, therefore *these* could not have pilfered the flour.

On the 16th of June they crossed the river Djür, a fine wide stream even in the dry season, in some places fordable, but now swollen and rapid with the recent rains. There were little boats of the country to pass the men and baggage over, but too small for the beasts, and they were made to swim across. There were seven boatfuls of people and luggage, and it took six minutes for each party to cross. The ladies, gentlemen and maids used the gutta percha boat, bought from Mr. Petherick, which, though rather the worse for wear and a rickety concern, took them over more pleasantly than the other boats would have done, as these were only hollowed-out trees. The gutta percha boat had served their purpose twice already and they had still other rivers to pass to get to their "rainy-season" encamping ground.

During their progress to this point, very short journeys were taken. There are always villages or groups of tookuls to be found, generally four or five miles distant from each other, to stay at for the night ; they halted about four o'clock in the afternoon, so that very little fatigue was experienced by the invalids. On stopping at any place

that pleased them, they sent for the Sheik or head of the village, who gave orders, and marked out their camping ground or where they were to lodge. The family and cattle were cleared out and the strangers took possession for the night. They found them always kind and willing to quit their little group of tookuls. There is one of them larger than the rest for the cows, one of less size for the goats and sheep, and the others for the family. The villages are widely spread and all round them, close up to the doors of the huts, are fields of durra, sesame, ground-nuts and pumpkins, the people looking clean and healthy. Their flocks are wonderfully large, often containing several thousands, but sheep are not used as food. The ladies at first bought as many as they liked for five copper bracelets, but after a while the negroes refused to sell any, when it was known that it was for the porters to eat. In the large tookul the elder lady with two of the maids and their dogs put up, with the baggage; the younger lady and her maid in another. All the cooking was done in another tookul, and the soldiers and negroes found some place near, where they made their fire and cooked their durra. The gentlemen went to another group of tookuls, but took their meals with the ladies. All went early to rest at night and rose at sunrise; it occupied an immense time to despatch the porters with their loads. On leaving, the next morning, they gave a present of bracelets or beads; each tribe has its preference as to the colour; hitherto, it had been green beads, and also white ones, like pigeons eggs. The Sheik had a special present, too; sometimes a pink cotton dress was given, sometimes a blue, and in this he strutted about his village as proud as a peacock.

The two first days after leaving the Mishra, it was not pretty, but for the next two or three days they saw beautiful trees, and many rich villages, which no one could call ugly, and thousands of birds of variously coloured plumage made it gay.

On the fourth day the soil was red sand with a great deal of iron; the grass growing on it was a fine light green, like a young cornfield in spring in England. The trees were magnificent and of most picturesque forms, and the cows, goats and sheep, which are the chief riches of the natives, are most abundant. The people live in beehive-looking huts, of which each family has three or four for itself and its flocks. For two or three days after the scenery was prettier still; there were such beautiful stations belonging to rich negroes or merchants, such neat houses surrounded by a high hedge of the poison plant, and such a number of cows and sheep. Then it changed, and they came to a less inhabited part of the country. Every now and then, the traces of herds of elephants and buffaloes showed that they had been recently there. It would be difficult to describe the beauty of the country they passed through during nine days' march; one day it was through low marshy ground, with hard and rather coarse grass, but full of rare flowers, some quite unknown to any of our party, and so beautiful, pretty, and sweet, that any hothouse in Europe might be proud of them. Von Heuglin not being an experienced botanist, they hurried on and did not gather many. After a while the trees were more numerous and of loftier growth, and the ladies went one whole day's journey through a wood of gardenias, as large as apple-trees, in full flower, with jasmine and sensitive plants.

There were shrubs with flowers, white, yellow and red. Afterwards, the woods became forests of high majestic trees, and such elegant and well assorted groups, that the ladies say no park in England could have finer, nor display more wonderful variety of shape and colour of leaves. They saw fruit trees, some like the orange, some like the wild plum or a sort of bullace, and numbers of others with red and black berries; also many creepers and wild grapes. There were no mosquitoes, and very few noxious insects, except the white

ant, which is a real plague as it destroys everything that touches the ground.

Up to the Djür they had been coming south-west since they left the Mishra of Rek. On the west of the river the country had much the same features as on the east bank. Immense plains with clumps of trees, creeping and flowering plants, beautiful irides, orchids, Amaryllides, aloes and cacti. In the grass was a pretty white flower, name not known, and orange and brown foxglove-shaped flowers. Ponds were occasionally met with, surrounded with trees, whose branches dipped in the water. "Oh!" (exclaims one of the ladies) "it is a lovely country and has richly repaid all our fatigue and expense"! They did not see so many birds as they expected, owing, they supposed, to the noise caused by their caravan of three or four hundred persons. Von Heuglin had shot sixty varieties on his former visit. There were large quantities of guinea fowls, doves, pigeons, rails, black partridges and other game birds. They saw antelopes and gazelles, and the traces of elephants and buffaloes.

The expense of travelling is enormous; one is in the hands of a clique of zeriba holders, who pass you on to each other, and all cheat and overcharge alike. They consist of traders from Khartüm, who have established zeribas or stations at a distance of about five days' journey from each other. For some years past, finding that elephants were becoming scarce and ivory dear on the White Nile, they have begun to come into the countries through which the Ghazal and Djür flow. They leave their vakeel or steward at their stations with armed men the whole year round, and in November they come themselves and collect all the ivory that has been obtained for them, when they return to their vessels waiting for them at the Mishra of Rek. Their plan is to place a zeriba in some negro village, which they pretend to protect, and as there are always feuds between the different villages,

of course the village having in it the soldiers and guns has the advantage over all the others, and these in succession put themselves under the same master and acknowledge his authority. The traders make them pay a tax of durra to feed their soldiers, and they require them to carry the ivory for them to the Mishra.

Till now they had been wonderfully favoured by the weather, but there had been occasional storms, and when they came they were dreadful, which made them all the more anxious to push on. The last experienced was just after crossing the Djür, when, not having succeeded in bringing over their huts and baggage, the whole party was exposed throughout the night to the pelting of the rain, there being no shelter near. Baron D'Ablaing was ill of fever as well as most of the servants, but the health of the invalid Baron von Heuglin and of the ladies was not affected by it.

On the 21st of June they arrived at Wau, the village where poor Dr. Steudner died. Biselli, a trader of Khartüm, has a zeriba here. He resided at Bongo, further west, whither they proceeded. His reception of them was magnificent: the firing of guns was four or five times repeated, as was the case at Gondokoro and at the Mishra, but he proved afterwards most treacherous and extortionate. He came to meet them at the entrance of the village and welcomed them, took them into a large Tookul where he gave them sherbet, coffee, merissa (a drink made with honey) and to all the people, black and white, abreek, the beer of the country. They asked him to sell them corn and bullocks as everything there belonged to him, but he told them that for *twenty-four hours* they were his guests, and treated them most liberally during that period, giving two repasts a day, of broth with bread and meat, to their ninety soldiers and twelve servants and as much durra as they could eat, besides fodder for the beasts. They felt ashamed to receive such hospitality, but it was understood to

be the custom of the country. He promised them soldiers also, as they were so dissatisfied with those whom they had got from Ali au Mori, and who had pilfered their flour.

Next day, Biselli being asked to lease to them a small zeriba, consisting of five tookuls, for the purpose of storing their baggage, he first agreed to take thirty thalers for a week, and then he asked two hundred. That was refused. They had everything packed up to leave him, when he came down to forty and they took possession. Then the price of his durra was ridiculous; an ardeb of durra at Khartüm costs fifteen piastres, and here, where it grows, he asked more than a hundred. The whole country is covered with durra, but he would not allow his people to sell them any. He turned out all their soldiers, and when a shed was built for them at the ladies' expense he asked rent for it. The man seemed to have lost his senses; but he did not begin the overcharging. Ali au Mori first imposed upon them. He made a contract with them for porters, and not knowing how many they would require, they agreed to give him six thalers a-head for ten days' journey. This did not seem excessive for only eighty men, but when it came to four hundred and eighty it became too serious to be borne.

They conclude their last letter rather philosophically—"In fine, we are in for it; we would never advise any body to come here without a good vakeel and plenty of money! but then it is a beautiful journey. How I wish you were here to enjoy all this with us!"

Letters of the 1st, 5th, 8th and 9th of July, 1863, complain of the same treatment from Biselli. Baron D'Ablaing and Baron von Heuglin being unfortunately ill, were unable to be of much service to them. They ordered the steamer, whose charter had expired in June, to be re-engaged and sent up with provisions and eighty more soldiers, as Biselli was corrupting their men and had already enticed

thirty away from them. As he was a subject of the Viceroy and his family resided at Khartüm, representations had been made to the Egyptian government regarding his conduct, which, it was hoped, would be successful. His property and family being at Khartüm afforded a guarantee that he would not dare to do any real harm beyond driving hard bargains for his durra.

October, 1864.—A few weeks after the preceding paper was read, most disastrous and melancholy intelligence was received communicating the death of Madame T. on the 20th of July, 1863, followed by that of the two European maid-servants, one on the 20th of August, 1863, and the other on the 22nd of January, 1864.

Mademoiselle T. resided after her mother's death with her female attendants at a place marked in the map, "Etablissement A.T." at which they had passed a pleasant day together on the 10th of July, rambling in the surrounding woods and making plans for the future. The next day Madame T. was taken ill, and becoming gradually worse died on the 20th. The gentlemen with the majority of the party continued to reside at Biselli's establishment, occasionally making short excursions in the neighbouring country.

Owing to these sad events and to the continued persecution and vexatious obstacles thrown in the way of the expedition by Biselli, as well as by his neighbour, another trader, Ali-au-Mori, and their vakeels or stewards acting under their orders, further progress to the Kosanga mountain, or to any other higher and healthier region, was prevented. The party was unable to remove from these men's control during six or seven months of the rainy season, lasting from July, 1863, to January, 1864, till, on the arrival of some additional soldiers and stores of provisions,* which they had contrived to find

* These were anxiously and affectionately provided and despatched in November, 1863, by Mademoiselle A. Van Capellen, who had remained at Khartüm when her sister and niece, Madame and Mademoiselle Tinne, set off on their second expedition. I lament to record the death of this lady also, at Khartüm, on the 20th of May, 1864.

means of sending for to Khartüm, they retraced their steps to their boats at the Mishra of Rek and embarked on their return voyage to Khartüm, where Mademoiselle T. and Barons D'Ablaing and von Heuglin arrived on the 29th March, 1864, the former with her female attendants in one dahabieh and the two gentlemen with the remainder of the expedition in two other boats.

The harassing difficulties and lonely situation of my young relative and the suspense and distress of mind endured by her during that weary and dismal period, which she has herself described to me most feelingly in her letters, can be readily understood; but I shall be excused from dwelling on so painful and tender a subject.

Biselli and Ali-au-Mori not only themselves refused to supply provisions and porters, but did all in their power to prevent the kindly and well-disposed natives, who were always quiet and inoffensive, from assisting the travellers in any way. There was the utmost difficulty in procuring corn or meat, and the game of the country, which was sometimes obtained, was very poor in quality and insufficient for the support of so large a retinue of people. It would appear that Biselli, although, in the first instance, hospitable and generous, was no doubt jealous, as well as Ali-au-Mori and others of the same base class, of the intrusion of strangers into their usurped domains, and dreaded the consequent exposure of their nefarious practices and the cruel treatment of the poor natives, whom they seize and compel to work for them or sell as slaves.

I sent to the *Times* a statement of the case, and also a copy of an unfinished letter found amongst the late Captain Speke's papers, addressed to me, which have been published in the numbers of that journal of the 12th of September and 5th of October, 1864. I refer to these documents, as giving fuller details of the disgraceful transactions of the Soudan traders, and also of the conduct of the governor of that

province, Moussa Pasha, who disappointed the expectation of affording any redress.* It is to be hoped that the representations, which have since been made on the subject to the Viceroy of Egypt, may be more successful, and that at least future travellers, who may direct their attention to the unexplored or imperfectly known lands of Equatorial Africa, may find their path smoothed and reap some benefit, resulting from the visit of the "Dutch Ladies' Expedition."

I have seen portions of the "Notes" of Baron von Heuglin, in which he states that Mademoiselle T. begged that he would not be deterred from continuing his journey in consequence of the misfortunes that had befallen her, and had offered him for this object whatever he could use of her stock of beads, ammunition, copper, stores, provisions &c., as well as all the soldiers she could spare; but, from the impossibility of hiring porters and other heavy expenses connected with such an undertaking, he declined her liberal proposal and preferred to return to Khartüm.

The results of this expedition will be found more fully and scientifically treated in the "Mittheilungen" of Dr. A. Petermann of Gotha, from notes and maps furnished by Baron von Heuglin, which, taken in connection with the information recently afforded by the travels of Speke, Petherick and all others, cannot fail to be welcome to and valued by the geographical world.

My obligations are especially due to our esteemed associate Mr. J. T. Towson, for the assistance he has rendered me in the compilation of the accompanying maps. The map of the countries between the Ghazal and the Dembo or Kozanga rivers is entirely new. It is reduced from a copy prepared by Von Heuglin and sent to me by Mademoiselle T. for presentation to the Royal Geographical Society of London, who, on the occasion of my reading the preceding paper, kindly lent me some of their valuable maps.

* See Note p. 40.

NOTE.

THE DUTCH LADIES' EXPEDITION ON THE WHITE NILE.

To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR,—Mention of the travels of the Dutch ladies in the Soudan will be remembered by most of your readers with interest; and this fact, combined with the special notice which that part of the world is exciting just now, especially in scientific and commercial circles, must be my apology for troubling you with any remarks upon the subject. One of the ladies forming the expedition, in a letter recently received, informs me that owing to the shameful manner in which they have been treated by the merchants, the expedition has been compelled to return to Khartūm without accomplishing its intended object,—that of reaching the country of the Nyam-Nams. She complains particularly of the conduct of Biselli and Ali au Mori, two native merchants, and proprietors of zeribas, or stations, on the White Nile, and who appear to wield absolute and unquestioned despotism over large districts, and now also of the conduct of Moussa Pasha, Governor of the Soudan. As the opening up of the newly-discovered and exceedingly fertile districts of the White Nile cannot fail to be of the utmost importance to the mercantile world, this hostility on the part of the native merchants and governors is a matter of much moment; and therefore I venture to go somewhat into detail. My informant appends to her letter a copy of a complaint she had sent to M. Thibaut, the French Vice-Consul. In this document she says:—

"When we arrived at the zeriba of Biselli, in June, 1863, we were very desirous to go beyond it as quickly as possible, in order to reach the salubrious country of the Nyam-Nams before the rains could render the rivers impassable. We asked them immediately to procure us porters, but day after day passed and porters never came. For three or four days Biselli had constantly something to say again about each contract, and would not bring anything to a close. In the end we allowed him to make the contract entirely as he understood it by his own scribe; but at the moment of signing he said all of a sudden that he had changed his mind, and did not wish to speak of it any more—that is, he wished to force us to remain with him in order to sell to us, at prices that pleased him, all that we had need of. In vain we tried to send and find porters in other zeribas. Biselli forbade all the negroes to act as guides to our people, or to carry our provisions, and we were obliged to give up passing the Kharif to the Nyam-Nams. In order properly to figure our position, it must be known that these merchants assume an absolute sovereignty over those countries which they call their 'beliel,' and as Biselli had threatened to kill every negro who sold us anything or helped us in any respect, we were entirely at his mercy, obliged to pay all that he wished, and still, notwithstanding the ridiculous prices he asked for everything—for instance, nine thalers for an ardeb of 'durra' (corn), in a country where it can ordinarily be had for nothing, he refused sometimes to sell us anything, and our people starving."

She then goes on to state how negroes were beaten, and in some cases shot, for attempting to relieve them; that Ali Abu Amouri, when applied to for help, refused to give it except upon terms equally outrageous with those of Biselli, and also forbade his negroes to sell or to assist them in any way. Selim also, Ali's steward, robbed them in every way possible, and encouraged his men to do so too. Biselli forbade his people when the last boats left to take charge of their letters; and it was only secretly, and on the promise of a handsome recompense, that they were able to induce a man to take them. Their people attempted to build huts to spend the rainy season in, but Biselli refused the help of his negroes, without which help they could not get materials. To this complaint of my informant were appended two reports of similar though even more atrocious outrages which fell under the immediate notice of M. von Heuglin, a well-known scientific traveller who accompanied the expedition. He stated that a soldier of his party had bought four elephant's tusks from a native Sheik, on learning which fact the people of the merchant Ali Abu Amouri attacked the negroes, took the Sheik and several others prisoners, and killed the Sheik's wife. The captured negroes would be sold as slaves. M. Kleiniznik, another traveller, had sent them about fifteen porters from a neighbouring station, Koolanda, with corn bought from the merchant Biselli, but having arrived near Biselli's zeriba they were arrested by one of his dragomen, who forced the negroes with threats to return with their loads. They next attempted to buy corn from the tribes of the Nyam-Nams; and a Sheik was bringing them a good supply when they were met by men of Ali Abu Amouri, who put both the negroes and Heuglin's soldiers in irons, and took them to the zeriba of Ali, where the soldiers were at last released, but the negroes detained as slaves, and three of their number, who had escaped, were retaken and shot.

On their return to Khartüm complaint was at once made to Moussa Pasha, and as he was a most violent and dreaded man nobody doubted that severe measures would be immediately taken. My correspondent describes the result as follows:—

"I sent my complaint through Consul Thibaut; but the Pasha has shown as clearly as possible, and in the rudest way, that he meant to do nothing, or as little as possible. First, he returned the complaint after two or three days, saying his interpreter could not translate it (though he speaks French fluently); then he attempted to decline interfering under various pretexts, so absurd that he himself was obliged to give them up, and is now putting off deciding anything on account of the difficulty of getting at the guilty parties in the rainy season; but that also is no reason, as he has got the steamboat."

Further still, when they were being exposed to the treatment of Biselli, a letter was sent to Moussa Pasha at Cairo by M. Thibaut, but he afterwards said that he did not receive it. However "not only did he not give the men or the letter asked for to protect us against his subjects, but—would you believe it?—he attempted to detain the boats that were at last setting out to our rescue, and that for a reason most unjust in itself. Three of our boats were full, and the

"fourth was on the point of starting, when he suddenly published a law that every soldier going up the White Nile should pay 100 piastres," and M. Thibaut had to pay for all the soldiers of the four boats on the threat that if he did not the first three boats would be stopped. "He did the same thing or nearly so to Petherick, whose letters I have also seen, who is having a lawsuit with him too." But this was not all; the Pasha actually tried to charge my informant with bringing slaves to Khartüm. The fact was, that when up the Nile she found that some of her soldiers had formed connexions with negresses, and not wishing to separate them insisted on their being married according to the Mohammedan rites; but on her return Moussa Pasha made a great fuss, asked for explanations from the Consulate, notwithstanding which he put the people in prison, and did everything to give her the appearance of having brought slaves, and for a time such was the rumour of the town. They would have so liked to catch a European in fault, for the Government is constantly slave-trading itself, and in the town it goes on worse than ever. She also gives an account of the shocking state to which Moussa Pasha has brought the country. "By the number of soldiers he is daily importing from Egypt (20,000 are already here) grain and meat are nearly unprocurable. Grain is ten times its usual price, and still rising." . . . "All the camels are seized for his soldiers, and merchandise has been brought for several months. The simplest things fetch immense profits, and the Soudan, once famous for its cheapness, is now dearer than Cairo. Most of the villages which were being established along the White Nile, and which I left flourishing, are now abandoned; the people flying from the dreadful taxes, and Khartüm is like a desert, nothing is to be got."

Such is the position of affairs in the Soudan; but having gone to such length I will not comment further than to say that these matters are now being brought under the notice of the Egyptian Government, and we may feel assured that its present enlightened ruler, when the facts are known to him, will remedy these evils. He has always shown the utmost consideration to commerce, is striving to develop the rich resources of his country, and has ever been ready to reform abuses. The doings of Moussa Pasha and the merchants may not have come under his immediate cognizance, but I feel assured they only require to be made known to him and he will doubtless effect a remedy. I am glad to see that your Egyptian correspondent, under date August 20th and 29th, has taken this matter up. He particularly refers to the gross conduct of Moussa Pasha, and the infamous traffic in slaves by some of the inferior merchants. It is to be regretted that at such a time Great Britain should have abolished its Consulate of the Soudan.

I remain, your obedient servant,

JOHN A. TINNE.

Briarley, Aigburth, near Liverpool, Sept. 9.

To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR,—Referring to my letter addressing you upon the subject of the Dutch Ladies' Expedition to the White Nile, I now desire to inform you that, a few days ago, I received a note from Mr. William Speke, jun., brother of the late Captain Speke, enclosing an unfinished letter of the deceased, written, as you will observe, the day prior to his death. This letter I have obtained permission to publish. It will be interesting to your readers, no doubt, as a relic of the renowned traveller, and it is also of value as confirming so fully the statement I made with regard to the condition of the Soudan.

Captain Speke having alluded to the Soudan Consulate, I would say that I have reason to believe that the ex-British Consul was not in any way concerned in the general practices of the traders complained of.

I beg to enclose copies, and to request that you will give them publicity.—

I am, your obedient servant,

JOHN A. TINNE.

Briarley, Aigburth, near Liverpool, Oct. 3, 1864.

"Jordans, Ilminster, Somerset, Sept. 26.

"MY DEAR SIR,—This letter was found among my brother, Captain Speke's things. It is unfinished—probably the last words he wrote, and very likely among his last thoughts, as I had seen him lately, and he expressed himself very anxious about Baker, having a great regard for him. I send you his photograph, as you may like to have it. You can fully sympathise with us, as you have also experienced so great a loss to your family.

"I am, yours truly,

"WILLIAM SPEKE, JUN.

"John Tinne, Esq., Liverpool."

"Neston Park, Corsham, Sept. 14.

"DEAR MR. TINNE,—I have been delighted by seeing the way in which you have been handling the Nile question in *The Times* of the 12th. The ladies' accounts of the way they were treated by those ruffians up there is a perfect picture, as far as it goes, of the true state of the system practised in those lands.

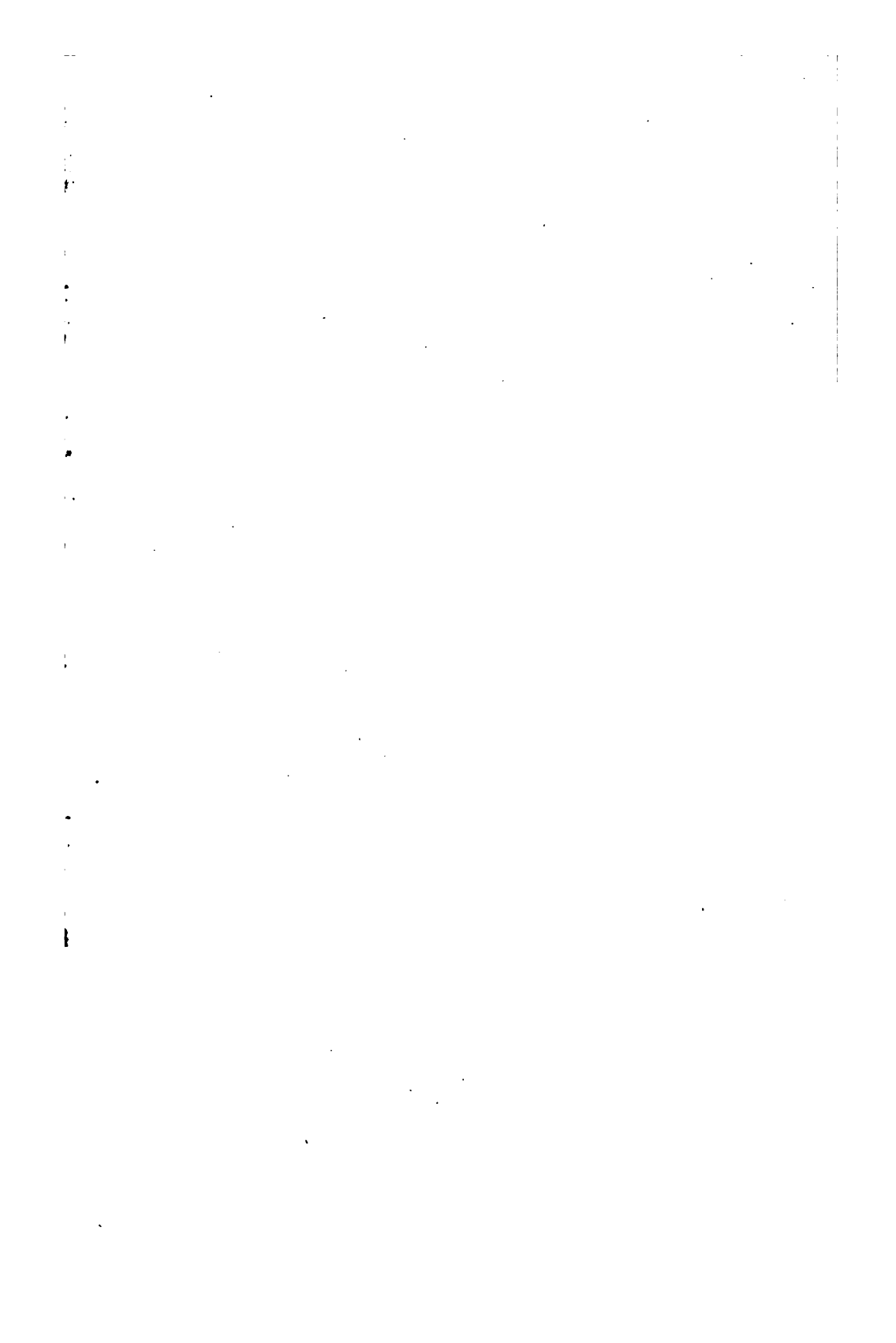
"There is one other reason not alluded to which must have operated to thwart the ladies' designs—viz., the jealousy the traders are so susceptible of to any one prying into the nature of the country they have appropriated to themselves. Pray do keep working this subject, for no one can do it better than yourself. No doubt, indeed, a consul is much wanted in the Soudan; but then he should not be a trader, for no one can trade honestly in those regions.

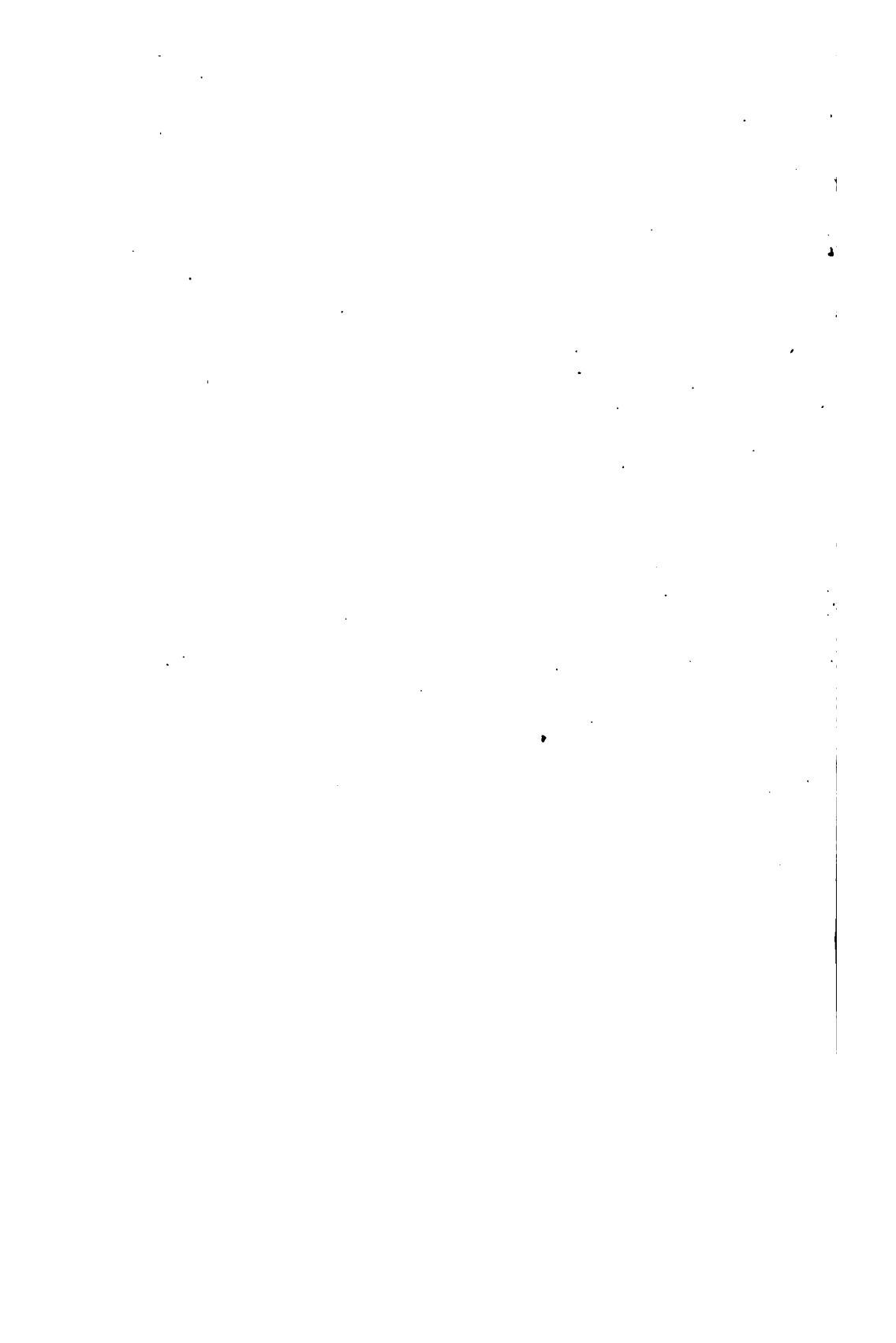
"I have great fears about the fate of Baker. He ordered Petherick to place
"a boat for him at Gondokoro this and last year. The boat was there, and the
"men with whom Baker went into the interior must have returned to that part,
"else we could not have heard of Baker's having gone to Unyoro. This being
"necessarily the case, how is it that Baker did not send a line by them to
"Petherick, unless some foul play can answer the question?

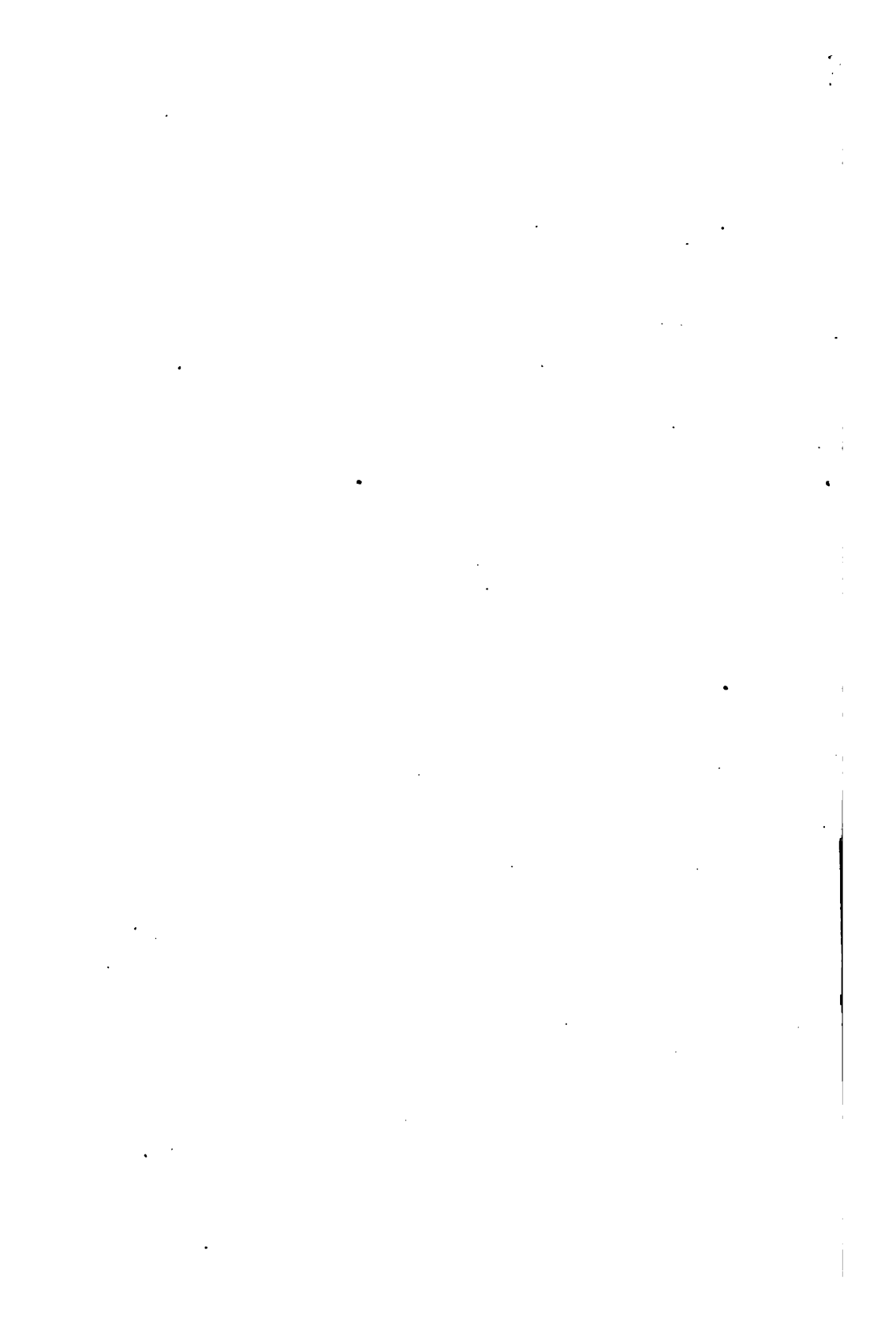
"For the love of those you have lost, do bring retribution on the miscreants
"who occasioned it.

"There is no richer land in the world than the equatorial regions, and
"nothing more of importance to the interests of Egypt, as well as our own
"merchants, than that of opening up those lands to legitimate commerce."









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